



April 2003

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State of Utah

Department of Workforce Services



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Business Seminar Scheduled for March! *They've Taken Your Money, What's Next in Health Care?* *"Ouch! The Burning Issues of Rising Health Costs"*



USANA Health Sciences will sponsor the **March Employer Committee Seminar** to be held on the **26th at Little America Hotel from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m.**

Mike Bahr, President/Chief Actuary for Altius Health Care will present valuable information on the current conditions and trends in the Health Care Industry. Mr. Bahr has worked in fee and risk arrangements, pricing and benefit design, and underwriting strategies for large and small groups. He will discuss the reasons for skyrocketing health care costs and ways to help you to manage and reduce

those costs. Discover what's available in the health care marketplace and how you can "get the best bang for your buck." Learn how HIPPA legislation affects you and your business.

The cost is \$25 per participant (includes luncheon and handout materials). To pre-register, please call the Business Services Center at (801) 468-0097, or Sylvia Farrand at (801) 468-0239. The Salt Lake & Tooele Employer Committee (SLEC/TEC) is a public service organization of employers dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of Workforce Services, Utah's Job Connection!

Salt Lake Area Chamber of Commerce **announces this year's Giant Steps Award Winners!**

By - Heidi Bailliff, SLACC

The Salt Lake Chamber will honor Small Business at the annual **Giant Step Awards Small Business Awards** luncheon, which is scheduled for **March 26, 2003** at the City Center Marriott. The winners are in four categories: Small Business of the Year - **Love Communications**, Entrepreneurial Success - **The Singing Cricket Cafe**, Home-based Business Success - **Bruno Group and Community Service** - **Art House Graphics**.

United Parcel Service and Bank One will be sponsoring the Awards Luncheon. The Award sponsors are Equitable Life and Casualty, Utah State Department of Workforce Services, IHC, Merit Medical and the media sponsor is KUTV2.

If you have questions or would like more information please call Jackie Sexton at 328-5053 or via email at jsexton@saltlakechamber.org or visit the Salt Lake Chamber website at www.saltlakechamber.org

DWS Opens New Employment Center in West Valley City

By Laurel Morris, EC Manager

Three hundred guests attended an open house on January 7, 2003 in celebration of the new Department of Workforce Services (DWS) West Valley Employment Center (EC) located at 2750 South 5600 West. The EC opened for business on December 4, 2002 and is co-located with the Salt Lake Tooele Applied Technology College.

The location of the West Valley EC is the result of a recommendation of the Central Region Council on Workforce Services. DWS and the Council sought to better serve West Valley area residents by providing one-stop services in a convenient location.

The West Valley EC is part of the DWS statewide network of one-stop centers known as Utah's Job Connection. There are over 30 computers in the Center's Job Connection Resource Room available for customers to use in their job seeking efforts. Customers can take advantage of the DWS web-site, jobs.utah.gov, as well as many other employment resources including but not limited to; America's Job Bank, labor market information, clerical skills tests, resume preparation programs, career counseling, training resources, and free employment related workshops.



Entrance to the new West Valley Employment Center

The West Valley Employment Center is a valuable resource for local employer customers as well. The facility provides conference room space for employer interviews and job fairs. In January, an information job fair for the Tooele Army Depot attracted 560 job seekers, and job referrals made on behalf of Fazoli's restaurant resulted in 70 hires.

Tooele Army Depot Recruitment Brings Job Seekers from Around the Nation

By Kim Auberger, Business Services manager

For the first time since it's realignment in 1993, the Tooele Army Depot is gearing up for a mass recruitment. The Depot posted over 45 job openings with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and recruited candidates from as far away as New York. During a two-day recruiting event held at the DWS Tooele and West Valley Employment Centers, nearly 2,000 people showed up looking to complete an application, as well as get briefed on the labor-intensive application process for federal jobs.

The defense industry in Utah is one of only a handful of industries which continued to expand in 2001, with spending totaling \$2.35 billion, rising 23% from the previous year (Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, January 2003). Utah's defense industry remains strong, with

employers such as the Depot, Hill Air Force Base, and Thiokol Propulsion leading the way.

Trina Griffith, DWS Business Consultant to Tooele County employers told reporters covering the event that Depot employees were not only there recruiting for their current openings (electricians, engineers, and warehouse related), but also to teach job candidates how to apply for federal jobs. The Depot requires an extensive Knowledge, Skills, Ability (KSA) form which needs to be completed specifically for each opening. Salaries for jobs, which were available, ranged from \$15.99/hr. up to \$60,000 per year. Carmen Bowles, DWS Business Consultant for Tooele County employers, oversaw the coordination of this major recruiting event.

News You Can Use

Pre-Layoff Assistance

In our changing economy, millions of workers lose their jobs each year because of layoffs or other economic-related conditions. Our Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) provides free pre-layoff assistance to employers and their affected workers when faced with a layoff situation. The overriding strategy of the DWU is to respond rapidly when layoffs are announced and deliver resources to help affected workers transition to new employment. The sooner workers start to manage the transition, the better the outcome for them and you, the employer. Studies show that the impacts of change can be smoother once your workers know that you are concerned about them.

When the DWU obtains information about a layoff, on-site Rapid Response Workshops are offered to the employer to assist the affected workers. These pre-layoff workshops include information on the following:

- Filing for Unemployment Insurance
- Other benefits and services available through the Department of Workforce Services
- Financial planning and protecting your 401(K)
- Extending health insurance under COBRA and other health insurance options
- Labor market information planning and effective job search skills
- Résumés and applications
- Interviewing techniques

For more information contact:

Department of Workforce Services
Dislocated Worker Unit
Dawn M. Lay, Rapid Response Coordinator
140 East 300 South, 5th Floor
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 526-4312
FAX (801) 526-9662
E-mail at dlay@state.ut.us

jobs.utah.gov *update*

In the first four months of operation there has been a dramatic rise in the number of registered job seekers with graduate degrees. The number of applicants with masters degrees or higher has grown to almost 15% of total applicants. Clearly the ability to access job openings via the Internet is attracting higher skilled job seekers!

Eight Prosecuted for Unemployment Fraud

During the month of January 2003, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) successfully prosecuted eight individuals for fraud in connection with their unemployment insurance (UI) claims. The former claimants, seven men and one woman, pled guilty to second and third degree felonies in district courts throughout the state.

"These defendants are required to pay DWS in excess of \$87,000 in overpayments and penalties," said Vince Iturbe, Manager of Benefit Payment Control. "The statutory penalties for UI fraud can be double the amount actually received in benefits." In addition, sentences handed down included jail time, community service, court and attorney fees. Some of the defendants immediately made partial payments on their debt.

"We currently have fifty-seven additional cases pending in courts throughout Utah and in other states. Investigation and court preparations continue every day. In the last several years, our methods of fraud detection have become increasingly sophisticated," said Iturbe. "The funds that pay for unemployment insurance benefits come from a tax on Utah's employers. These prosecutions are evidence of our commitment to the proper payment of benefits. Doing so protects the UI trust fund for employers and ensures that money is available to pay benefits to workers who are both eligible and honest," stated Christopher Love, UI Director.



Do you find it helpful to have the latest occupational wage information for Utah and its sub-state areas? That data comes from the yearly OES survey. If your business is surveyed, please fill out and return your form, so that we can continue to publish this very helpful wage information.

Thanks!

DWS Awards \$250,000 for Cultural Integration Grant

As Utah's workplace becomes increasingly more culturally diverse, employers are expressing concerns about how low English proficiency and communication problems are impacting their businesses. They asked Governor Leavitt for help at the State Council on Workforce Services meeting held in April 2002.

The governor responded by charging the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to convene a Cultural Integration Advisory Committee to address those concerns. The committee's first step was to commission a telephone survey of over 1,000 randomly selected Utah employers to quantify the impacts of cultural integration and English skills issues and challenges they face.

The survey revealed that limited English proficiency had significant impacts on the workforce associated with technical capability, training, safety, the ability to advance and customer service. The survey also found that a sizable majority of employers (63%) would take advantage of a successful cultural integration and English skill-building program, if offered.

A \$250,000 one-year grant was awarded to Granite School District, Adult and Community Education Department on January 14, 2003. The grant will fund services that provide individualized diversity strategies and initiatives for ten Utah employers. Services may include and are not limited to the following: adult vocational literacy, including English language skills for the limited English proficient person; employment-related cultural integration diversity training and related activities that are clearly linked to the organization's overall business goals and become part of the company's organizational practice.

"It's clear that in order to meet the objectives of Governor Leavitt's 1000-Day economic plan, we address the need of cultural diversity in the workplace," said DWS Deputy Director Darin Brush. "We hope to accomplish this in many ways; this grant is a first step to assist employers in addressing this critical need."

10 Wasatch front employers have been selected as participants of this cultural integration grant. While they have varying needs, all share the common philosophy that communication must be open and effective, whereby the employee will understand the company's mission, vision and values. There must be opportunities for the employee to grow and advance.

Granite will work on-site with each employer for the next year to accomplish the following:

- Employers will recognize an increase in English proficiency among a percentage of those employees chosen to participate.
- Employers will be taught employment-related cultural assimilation, which will result in employees having adequate comprehension of everyday workplace necessities. This could include training, advancement opportunities and safety.

At conclusion of the grant, the employer will be left with resources so the services provided can be replicated within the company. During the year-long grant, a model will be developed which will go statewide to all Utah employers in 2004.

For more information on the Cultural Integration Initiative, contact Barbara Darling at the Department of Workforce Services 801-526-9294.

New Wage Data for Utah Just Released!

Brand-new occupational wage data for Utah has just been posted on the DWS/Economic Information Web page. This is the most current, accurate occupational wage data available for Utah.

The main page for wage data is: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/Owi/wages.asp>. From there, you can click down to find wage data for both your area of the state and the state as a whole, definitions of occupational titles, and helpful links to other wage, benefit and labor law-related web pages.

There are also informative articles on geographic differences in Utah wages, national wages vs. Utah wages, information about how this wage data gets collected, and a wage conversion table (hourly to weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, annually).

To all of the employers who participated in last year's *Occupational Employment Survey*, the source of this data, we extend a big "Thank You!" Without the voluntary cooperation of about 3,000 businesses statewide, we would not be able to provide this valuable data.

Utah Department of Workforce Services

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Salt Lake City, UT 84111

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Events Calendar**Contact Numbers**

Employer Seminars and Events

March:

3rd, 10th & 24th – High School Presentations
(Murray, Jordan & Murray)

26th – Seminar at Little America Hotel
(Controlling Rising Health Costs)

April:

2nd – Salt Lake and Tooele Employer Committee Meeting
9th – Better Your Business Workshop at DWS
(Pre-Layoff Services)
29th, 30th & May 1st - SLACC Business-to-Business Expo

May:

13th & 14th – High School Presentations (Riverton)
21st – Seminar At Little America Hotel
(Harassment in the Workplace)

Business Services Center:	801-468-0097
Child Care Outreach:	801-526-4342
Contributions:	801-526-9235
Labor Market Info:	801-526-9340
New Hire Reporting:	801-526-4361
Rapid Response:	801-526-4312
UI Benefit/Tax Info.:	800-222-2857
DOL Wage/Hour Div.:	801-524-5706
Utah Labor Commission:	801-530-6801
Workforce Council:	801-468-0095
WOTC Tax Credit:	801-526-9484

Business Consultants:

Connie Carter, <i>Midvale EC</i>	801-567-3940
Sherrill Chapman, <i>Downtown EC</i>	801-524-9272
Shelly Burleson, <i>Metro EC</i>	801-536-7173
Karen Curinga, <i>South County EC</i>	801-269-4762
Carmen Bowles, <i>Tooele EC</i>	435-833-7327